

## RESPITE CARE

A Respite Care Program for licensed foster parents and licensed relative caretakers was introduced in March 1993. Respite care is the provision of periodic and/or intermittent, temporary substitute care of children who are in the care and custody of CD, placed in a licensed foster home or in the home of a licensed relative. It is designed to provide relief from the stresses of the constant responsibilities of providing out-of-home care and to provide temporary relief from stressful or emergency situations. It is not for use in regular child care situations when a parent would normally use traditional child care providers.

Respite care may be planned in advance or used in emergency situations and is available to foster/relative parents based on the needs of the family. These needs may include, but are not limited to, illness, death in the family, hospitalization, or imminent risk of removal of the child where “time out” would stabilize the placement. Respite care is provided at a minimum of 12 hours, daily, overnight, or on a weekly basis in the home of the caretaker or another approved home or facility. Caretakers are encouraged to recruit providers with whom the children in their home are familiar.

All respite care providers may attend regular foster parent training and any in-service training provided by the Division. Respite care providers for children placed in specialized foster homes also receive child specific training to care for the medical, behavioral or emotional problems of these individualized children. In 2004, there were 466 Career respite providers and 2751 other contracted respite providers. (There is some overlap in the numbers as some providers will have both contracts.)